

GHSWGT: What You Need to Know Quick Guide

- Students must pass the GHSWT to receive a high school diploma
- The assessment is a test of ***persuasive*** writing.
- The assessment evaluates four domains of writing. Each domain contributes a pre-determined weight to the total score.

Ideas (40%)	Organization (20%)
Style (20%)	Conventions (20%)
- Scale scores range from 100 - 350.

100-199	= Does Not Meet
200-249	= Meets the Standard
250-350	= Exceeds the Standard

What is persuasive writing?

- Writing that has as its purpose convincing others to accept the writer's position as valid, adopt a certain point of view, or take some action.

Prepare Yourself to Write

- Read the *Writing Situation* and *Directions for Writing* carefully.
- Brainstorm for ideas.
- Consider how to address your audience.
- Decide what ideas to include and how to organize them.
- Write only in English.

Make Your Paper Meaningful

- Use your knowledge and/or personal experiences that are related to the topic.
- Express a clear point of view.
- Fully support your position with specific details, examples, and convincing reasons.
- Include an appeal to logic and/or emotions.
- Organize your ideas in a clear and logical order.
- Write a persuasive paper and stay on topic.

Make Your Paper Interesting to Read

- Use examples and details that would be convincing to your audience.
- Use appropriate voice that shows your interest in the topic.
- Use precise, descriptive, vivid words.
- Vary the type, structure, and length of your sentences.
- Use effective transitions.

Edit and Revise Your Paper

- Consider rearranging your ideas and changing words to make your paper better.
- Add additional information or details to make your paper complete.
- Proofread your paper for usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

An effective controlling idea:

- Serves as the focus of the paper
- Ties all of the information in the paper to the assigned writing topic and persuasive purpose

- Helps the reader understand the writer's purpose: "What is the writer convincing me to think or do?"
- May be directly stated but is usually implied

EXAMPLE WRITING PROMPT

Writing Situation

Many public school systems across the country require students to wear uniforms. Some educators believe that wearing uniforms will help students concentrate more on their school work. On the other hand, some students argue that having to wear uniforms prevents them from expressing their individuality. Your principal is considering whether students at your school should wear uniforms.

Directions for Writing

Write a letter to your principal expressing your view on school uniforms. Provide convincing reasons and specific examples to support your position.

Relevant details focus directly on the controlling idea and topic, serving to advance its development.

In a persuasive response about whether or not to adopt school uniforms, the following details would be relevant:

- How much uniforms cost
- Whether or not students like uniforms
- Whether or not wearing uniforms will improve concentration in class and/or test scores.
- Whether or not uniforms will decrease cliques
- Whether or not uniforms hinder a student's ability to express his/her individuality

Reminders:

- If it is not the usual practice to furnish pencils and pens, students should be instructed to bring two No. 2 pencils and a blue or black pen. The final draft must be written in pen.
- Students should read the topic page carefully for directions about the genre and topic.
- Students should use the Writing Checklist.
- Avoid weak or thinly veiled restatements of the assignment.
- Avoid flat statements of the thesis or main idea, particularly using *I* or *this essay*.
 - "In this paper I will show that the overemphasis on winning is dangerous for young athletes."
 - "This essay will cover the many opportunities available to young people who choose computer science as a major."

Thesis Statements

- tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter under discussion.
- is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper.
- directly answers the question asked of you. A thesis is an interpretation of a question or subject, not the subject itself. The subject, or topic, of an essay might be World War II or Moby Dick; a thesis must then offer a way to understand the war or the novel.
- makes a claim that others might dispute.
- is usually a single sentence somewhere in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.